

Message Text

PAGE 01 TEL AV 10406 01 OF 02 261438Z

42

ACTION SS-30

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S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 TEL AVIV 10406

EXDIS

BEIRUT POUCH BAGHDAD

E O 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PBOR, IS, XF

SUBJ: ISRAEL'S FEARS RE PALESTINIAN ENTITY

SUMMARY: RIGID ISRAELI OPPOSITION TO ANY SEPARATE PALESTINIAN
REP AT GENEVA CONF STEMS FROM DETERMINATION
NOT TO SEE EITHER INDEPENDENT PALESTINIAN STATE IN
WEST BANK-GAZA OR AUTONOMOUS PALESTINIAN ENTITY THERE UNDER
NOMINAL UN OR JORDANIAN RULE BUT IN FACT CONTROLLED BY PALES-
TINIAN NATIONALISTS, AND PERHAPS EXTREME MILITANT ONES
(THE FEDAYEEN). WE BELIEVE LATEST POSITION OF LABOR PARTY,
ALLOWING FOR POSSIBILITY THAT JORDAN MIGHT BECOME PALESTINIAN-
IZED OR MIGHT ESTABLISH PALESTINIAN PROVINCE IN WEST BANK,
BENDS FARTHER TOWARD PALESTINIAN NATIONAL ASPIRATIONS
THAN VIEWPOINT OF MAJORITY OF ISRAELI LEADERS. EVEN KING
HUSSEIN'S UNITED ARAB KINGDOM SCHEME WORRIES MANY ISRAELIS.
ISRAELIS DO NOT WANT HUSSEIN'S PALESTINIAN SUBJECTS TO BE DISGRUN-
TLED, BUT THEY FEAR INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF PALESTINIAN
DISTINCTIVENESS MAY STRENGTHEN RATHER THAN DISSIPATE PALES-
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PAGE 02 TEL AV 10406 01 OF 02 261438Z

TINIAN NATIONALISM. ALTHOUGH OCTOBER WAR HAS LED MANY
ISRAELIS TO RETHINK THEIR OPPOSITION TO POSSIBLE
LIMITED CONCESSIONS TOWARD PALESTINIAN AUTONOMY, THEY ARE VERY
LEERY OF IDEA OF ONLY LOOSE WEST BANK-EAST BANK CONFEDERATION.

THEY WANT TO SEE FIRM HASHEMITE HAND BEHIND SCENES ON WEST BANK AFTER PEACE SETTLEMENT, EVEN IF THIS WOULD HARM CHANCES OF DESIRED DISSIPATION OF PALESTINIAN NATIONALISM, AND THEY MAY INSIST ON HAVING CLANDESTINE ROLE THEMSELVES DURING FIRST PHASE FOLLOWING SETTLEMENT. THEY WOULD WANT TO KEEP OUT NOT ONLY MILITANT NATIONALISTS BUT ALSO MARXISTS AND OTHER EXTREME LEFTISTS AND TO PREVENT MASSIVE REMIGRATION TO WEST BANK, FIGURING THAT OVERCROWDING ON WEST BANK WOULD ADD MORAL WEIGHT ABROAD TO FUTURE IRREDENTIST PALESTINIAN DEMANDS FOR TERRITORY IN ISRAEL PROPER. IN OUR ESTIMATION, IF HUSSEIN AFTER PEACE SETTLEMENT ESTABLISHED AUTONOMOUS PALESTINIAN PROVINCE ON WEST BANK WITH SAFEGUARDS SATISFACTORY TO ISRAEL, AND MILITANT NATIONALISTS NEVERTHELESS MANAGED TO TAKE OVER, ISRAEL WOULD INTERVENE MILITARILY. END SUMMARY..

1. ISRAELIS DURING PAST 2 WEEKS

WENT THROUGH PERIOD OF DEEPSEATED ALARM WHEN THE THOUGHT FOR A WHILE THEY MIGHT BE CALLED UPON, AS CONDITION FOR OPENING OF GENEVA PEACE CONF, TO AGREE THAT PALESTINIAN REPRESENTATION AT CONF SHOULD BE TOPIC FOR DISCUSSION AT EARLY STAGE. ISRAELIS ALMOST UNANIMOUSLY SAW IN THIS AN EGYPTIAN PLOY TO RAILROAD ISRAEL INTO ACQUIESCING IN PRESENCE OF A SEPARATE FEDAYEEN-RUN PALESTINIAN DELEGATION, AND BY CLEAR IMPLICATION, IN NOTION OF EITHER INDEPENDENT PALESTINIAN STATE IN WEST BANK-GAZA, OR AT LEAST AUTONOMOUS PALESTINIAN ENTITY THERE WHICH WOULD BE UNDER NOMINAL UN OR JORDANIAN RULE AT BEGINNING BUT IN FACT WOULD BE CONTROLLED BY MILITANT PALESTINIAN NATIONALISTS.

2. LABOR PARTY ELECTION PLATFORM APPROVED DEC 20 (SEPTEL)

CALLS FOR EXPRESION OF "SELF-IDENTITY" OF PALESTINIANS INSIDE A "JORDANIAN-PALESTINIAN STATE ADJOINING ISRAEL. "PLATFORM LANGUAGE (SAME AS IN TEL AVIV 9619) ALLOWS IN EFFECT FOR POSSIBILITY THAT SUCH STATE MIGHT BE CONSTITUTED TO BE MORE PALESTINIAN THAN JORDANIAN, IN THAT THE STATE IS DESCRIBED ONLY AS AN "ARAB STATE TO THE EAST OF (ISRAEL." IT ALSO DOES NOT SECRET

PAGE 03 TEL AV 10406 01 OF 02 261438Z

PRECLUDE POSSIBILITY THAT JORDANIAN AND PALESTINIAN COMMUNITIES WITHIN SUCH STATE MIGHT CHOOSE TO SEGREGATE THSMELVES GEOGRAPHICALLY-- I.E. WITH AUTONOMOUS PALESTINIAN PROVINCE ON WEST BANK. IT DOES, HOWEVER, EXPRESS OUTRIGHT OPPOSITION TO "THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN ADDITIONAL SEPARATE PALESTINIAN ARAB STATE WEST OF THE JORDAN RIVER."

3. IN OUR JUDGMENT, THIS IS BY FAR THE MOST FORTHCOMING POSITION TOWARD PALESTINIAN NATIONAL ASPIRATIONS WHICH ANY ISRAELI GOVT COULD AGREE ON AT THIS TIME AND STANDS CLOSER TO THOSE ASPIRATIONS THAN DO THE PERSONAL VIEWPOINTS OF MAJORITY OF ISRAELI LEADERS,AS WE EXPLAIN BELOW. FURTHERMORE, EXCEPT FOR TINY SPLINTER PARTIES

OF NO CONSEQUENCE WHATEVER, MOST FLEXIBLE POSITION ON PALESTINIAN ISSUE TO BE FOUND IN ISRAELI POLITICAL SPECTRUM TODAY IS THAT OF MAPAM PARTY (PARTNER OF LABOR PARTY IN LABOR ALIGNMENT). ALTHOUGH MAPAM AGREES WITH LABOR PARTY THAT IT WOULD CERTAINLY BE PREFERABLE FOR NO ADDITIONAL ARAB STATE TO BE ESTABLISHED WEST OF JORDAN RIVER, MAPAM BELIEVES IT IS WRONG FOR ISRAEL TO SEEK TO RULE IT OUT, AS PALESTINIANS SHOULD HAVE FULL RIGHT OF SELF-DETERMINATION. HOWEVER, WE ARE CERTAIN MAPAM WOULD OPPOSE AS FIRMLY AS ANY OTHER GROUP OF ISRAELIS THE IDEA THAT ISRAEL COULD ACQUIESCE IN TAKEOVER OF AN INDEPENDENT PAKESTINIAN ENTITY BY EXTREME MILITANT NATIONALISTS BENT ON DISSOLUTION OF ISRAEL.

4. IT CAN BE SAID THERE ARE TWO SCHOOLS HERE ON WHAT SHOULD BE DONE TO CONTAIN PALESTINIAN IRREDENTISM: FIGHT IT TOOTH AND NAIL, OR MAKE LIMITED CONCESSIONS TO IT IN HOPE IT CAN THUS BE DEFUSED. THERE MAY BE MAJORITY TENDING IN LATTER DIRECTION AMONG ISRAELI LEADERS, THIS SCHOOL CLEARLY HAS GROWN SINCE OCTOBER WAR. BUT, NOTWITHSTANDING LABOR PARTY PLATFORM PLANK QUOTED ABOVE, WHETHER ISRAEL WOULD DARE RISK AGREEING TO SOLUTION TO PALESTINIAN PROBLEM OUTLINED IN AMMAN 6467 --- LOOSE CONFEDERATION OF JORDAN AND A RUMP PALESTINE UNDER THE HASHEMITES, WITH WEST BANK AND GAZA STRIP DEMILITARIZED-- IS AT BEST UNCERTAIN.

SECRET

PAGE 01 TEL AV 10406 02 OF 02 261452Z

41

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S E C R E T SECTION 2 OF 2 TEL AVIV 10406

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5. FLEXIBLE-MINDED ISRAELIS CAN SEE MERIT IN JORDAN'S PERMITTING SOME DEGREE OF LOCAL AUTONOMY FOR THOSE WEST BANKERS WHO WOULD COME BACK UNDER JORDANIAN RULE AS PART OF PEACE SETTLEMENT. ISRAELIS KNOW THAT JORDANIAN RULE OVER WEST BANK

BEFORE 1967 WAS ARBITRARY AND HARSH AND THAT THIS MAY HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO LOCAL PALESTINIAN NATIONAL ASPIRATIONS. THEY WOULD PREFER FOR JORDAN'S WEST BANK POPULATION AFTER ISRAEL-JORDAN PEACE SETTLEMENT NOT TO BE DISGRUNTLED FOR THIS REASON. A SECOND REASON WOULD BE ISRAELI DESIRE FOR PRO-PALESTINIAN PRESSURES ON HUSSEIN FROM REST OF ARAB WORLD TO EASE, AND THEY REALIZE THAT WEST BANK AUTONOMY ON PURELY LOCAL MATTERS WOULD BE SOMETHING HUSSEIN COULD POINT OT. HOWEVER, SKEPTICS ON PALESTINIAN PROBLEM ARE DISTURBED BY THOUGHT OF INSTITUTIONALIZING WEST BANK SEPARATENESS WITH A PROVINCIAL LEGISLATURE AND PROVINCIAL CAPITAL, AND ESPECIALLY NOTION OF CALLING SUCH PROVINCE "PALESTINE" AND IMPLYING RECOGNITION OF BASIC DIFFERENCES OF CHARACTER (IF NOT NATIONALITY) BETWEEN WEST BANKERS AND EAST BANKERS. THEIR APPREHENSIONS ARISE FROM BELIEF SHARED BY VIRTUALLY ALL ISRAELIS: THAT ALL PALESTINIANS WHEREVER THEY CURRENTLY RESIDE, AND REGARDLESS WHETHER THEY HAVE BEEN INTEGRATED INTO ECONOMIES OF JORDAN, KUWAIT, SAUDI ARABIA,

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PAGE 02 TEL AV 10406 02 OF 02 261452Z

ETC, OR ARE STILL LIVING IN GAZAN OR LEBANESE REFUGEE CAMPS, ARE IRREDENTISTS FAVORING EVENTUAL TRANSFORMATION OF ISRAEL INTO BINATIONAL STATE HAVING PALESTINIAN MAJORITY. IRREDENTISM OF PALESTINIANS IN ISRAELI EYES IS ONLY MATTER OF RELATIVITY.

6. IF FULLY AUTONOMOUS PALESTINIAN ENTITY IN WEST BANK AND GAZA WERE ESTABLISHED DESPITE ISRAEL'S RESERVATIONS, ISRAELIS WOULD CERTAINLY WANT CREDIBLE JORDANIAN DETERENT TO OUTSIDE MEDDLERS DESIRING TO HELP INHABITANTS OF SUCH ENTITY ACHIEVE SOLUTION AGAINST ISRAEL BY FORCE. AND THEY WOULD MUCH PREFER TO SEE FIRM HASHEMITE HAND BEHIND SCENE TO CHOK OFF MORE EXTREME MANIFESTATIONS OF PALESTINIAN NATIONALISM INCLUDE PALESTINIAN ENTITY. MANY ISRAELIS REALIZE THAT CLANDESTINE JORDANIAN CONTROLS OF THIS KIND COULD PROVIDE IRRITANT THAT WOULD DRIVE WEST BANK POPULATION TOWARD EXTREMISM. THEY THUS COULD UNDERMINE WHAT LITTLE CHANCE THERE WOULD BE FOR LOCAL NATIONAL ASPIRATIONS GRADUALLY TO BE DISSIPATED BY FACT OF ENTITY'S EXISTENCE AND FOR A MODERATE PALESTINIAN LEADERSHIP TO DEVELOP OVER TIME. DESPITE THIS RISK OF COUNTERPRODUCTIVITY, ISRAELIS WOULD WANT CONTROLS TO BE THERE, AT LEAST DURING A FIRST PHASE LASTING SEVERAL YEARS.

7. AS WE HAVE PREVIOUSLY REPORTED, IT IS NOT JUST MILITANT PALESTINIAN NATIONALISM WHICH WORRIES ISRAELIS. IT IS ALSO MARXISM AND OTHER EXTREME LEFTIST IDEOLOGY WHICH CHARACTERIZES MOST OF FEDAYEEN MOVEMENT. ISRAELIS CAN SEE THIS RADICALISM SWEEPING LIKE WILDFIRE THROUGH POPULATIONS OF WEST BANK AND GAZA STRIP IF FEDAYEEN WERE EVER TO RETURN TO AREA. RESULT WOULD BE THAT PALESTINIAN ENTITY, WHETHER ONLY AUTONOMOUS PROVINCE OF JORDAN OR ACTUAL INDEPENDENT STATE, WOULD BECOME IMMEDIATE OBJECT OF ADMIRATION OF SYRIA, IRAQ, ALGERIA, AND SOUTH YEMEN. EVEN IF FRESH MID EAST WARS DID NOT ERUPT,

HIGHLY UNSTABLE SITUATION WOULD BE CREATED BY FIRING MILITANT PALESTINIAN NATIONALISM WITH IDEOLOGICAL LEFTIST RADICALISM AND GIVING TO BOTH A TERRITORIAL AND POPULATION BASE CONTIGUOUS WITH ISRAEL.

8. ANOTHER LIKELY RESULT WHICH CONCERNS ISRAELIS WOULD BE DANGER THAT PALESTINIANS FROM LEBANON-, SYRIA, EAST JORDAN (I.E. LARGELY CAMP DWELLERS), AND EVEN KUWAIT, SAUDI ARABIA, SECRET

PAGE 03 TEL AV 10406 02 OF 02 261452Z

AND ELSEWHERE (I.E. LOCALLY INTERGRATED PEOPLE) MIGHT MIGRATE EN MASSE TO A PALESTINIAN ENTITY NOT UNDER FULL AND OBVIOUS HASHEMITE CONTROL. ISRAELIS FEAR THAT SUCH OVERCROWDING, IN ADDITION TO CONTRIBUTING TO INTERNAL INSTABILITY OF PALESTINIAN ENTITY, WOULD ADD CONSIDERABLE MORAL WEIGHT IN EYES OF WORLD TO IRREDENTIST CLAIMS OF ENTITY AGAINST ISRAEL. DEEPEST ISRAELI FEAR OF ALL IS THAT ENTIRE NON-JEWISH WORLD MIGHT SOMEDAY COME TO CONCLUSION THAT ONLY SOLUTION TO MID EAST PROBLEM IS INDEED TO ESTABLISH COMBINED JEWISH-PALESTINIAN STATE IN PLACE OF ISRAEL OR, AT MINIMUM, TO REVERT TO 1947 UN PARTITION PLAN FOR PALESTINE.

9. THUS, WE DOUBT GOI WOULD CONTEMPLATE WITHDRAWING ISRAELI FORCES FROM WEST BANK AND GAZA STRIP BEFORE SEEING TO IT THAT ARRANGEMENTS WERE IN PLACE FOR SCREENING ALL PROSPECTIVE ARRIVALS IN THESE AREAS FROM ABROAD AND FOR KEEPING EXTREME LEFTISTS, TERRORISTS, AND MASSIVE NUMBERS OF WOULD-BE RETURNEES OUT. ONE CAN ONLY SPECULATE ABOUT RANGE OF POSSIBLE ARRANGEMENTS FOR KEEPING FEDAYEEN OUT WHICH ISRAEL COULD ACCEPT, BUT WE DOUBT ISRAELIS WOULD GO ALONG WITH SET-UP WHICH DID NOT GIVE THEM DIRECT PARTICIPATION

(CLANDESINELY, IF NECESSARY) DURING AT LEAST THE FIRST FEW YEARS. PRESUMABLY ISRAELIS WOULD ALSO WANT DEMILITARIZATION PROVISIONS WHICH WOULD IMPLY GOI RIGHT TO INTERVENE IN CASE OF MAJOR VIOLATION. FINALLY, IT IS HARD TO VISUALIZE ISRAEL ACCEPTING ARRANGEMENT FOR WEST BANK WHICH DID NOT SPELL OUT EXTENSIVE ACCESS TO AREA FOR ISRAELI TOURISTS AND PILGRIMS. ISRAELIS WOULD PROBABLY ARGUE FOR THIS ON GROUNDS THAT ISRAEL WOULD BE GRANTING TO WEST BANKES, IN TURN, AND ALSO TO GAZANS, FAIRLY FREE ACCESS TO VISIT ISRAEL, NOTABLY FOR EMPLOYMENT.

10. QUESTION ARISES, WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF ARRANGEMENT WERE WORKED OUT WHEREBY ISRAEL RETURNED MOST OF WEST BANK TO JORDAN. JORDAN ESTABLISHED PALESTINIAN AUTONOMOUS PROVINCE THERE WITH SAFEGUARDS SATISFACTORY TO ISRAEL, AND NEVERTHELESS MILITANT PALESTINIAN NATIONALISTS SOMEHOW SUCCEEDED IN SUP-PLANTING HASHEMITE- CONTROLLED PROVINCIAL AUTHORITY AND TOOK OVER CONTROL OF AREA. WE BELIEVE THAT ISRAEL WOULD INTERVENE MILITARILY. IN OTHER WORDS, ONLY IF OVER A PERIOD OF MANY YEARS A MODERATE PALESTINIAN LEADERSHIP EVOLVED ON WEST BANK WHICH WAS SECRET

PAGE 04 TEL AV 10406 02 OF 02 261452Z

OPENLY DEDICATED TO PROPOSITION THAT INDEPENDENT JEWISH STATE HA
RIGHT TO EXIST WITHIN ITS EXISTING BORDERS, AND ONLY IF THIS
LEADERSHIP HAD SUPPORT OF VAST MAJORITY OF PALESTINIANS EVERY-
WHERE AND FEDAYEEN ORGANIZATIONS IN BEIRUT SUFFERED FINAL
POLITICAL ECLIPSE, COULD ANY MEANINGFUL CHANGE OCCUR IN ISRAEL'S
ABIDING AND UNIVERSAL SUSPICION OF PALESTINIAN NATIONAL
AMBITIONS.
KEATING

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